THE CATHOLIC CEMETERIES

HERITAGE

SPRING / SUMMER 2016

A newsletter for friends of The Catholic Cemeteries

Sister Margaret Mewhorter (left) and Sister Caroline Berres hold a portrait of the Poor Clares community, with Sister Anne Condon seated in the front row center.

Sister Anne Condon

Resurrection Cemetery

Poor Clares remember a beloved sister

As eleven Poor Clares, relatives and friends looked on, Sister Anne Condon, age 102, was laid to rest at Resurrection Cemetery in Mendota Heights on a chilly winter day in January 2016.

A founder of the Poor Clares community in Bloomington, Sister Anne was described in a eulogy by Sister Helen Weier as "a great woman of God" whose life was characterized by deep faith, hard work, gratitude and dedication to the Poor Clares.

Born in Minneapolis, Sister Anne took her vows in 1933 at the Sauk Rapids Poor Clares monastery. In the early 1950s, she and five other nuns were sent to the Twin Cities to establish a presence in the Archdiocese of Saint Paul and Minneapolis.

"It had been Sister Anne's dream for us to have a monastery in Minneapolis," said Sister Caroline Berres, also a community founder. "She felt called to come here."

Bloomington was still rural in those days, and a generous gift of farmland became the location for the new monastery, near what is today the intersection of Russell Avenue and 86th Street. Later, as the community grew in members, additions were added to the building.

Sisters Caroline describes Sister Anne as an adventurous, joyful spirit who was always open to new opportunities. In the 1960s, a Korean archbishop, Harold Henry, invited the community to establish a monastery in South Korea. Sister Anne and several other sisters spent the next few years helping to get the monastery, located on the island of Jeju, up and running.

Sister Anne was also very involved in the Poor Clares federation of monasteries. "She held in great respect an educated and cultural life, making her the logical person to be a leader of a study program for contemplative sisters at the then-College of Saint Teresa in Winona," said Sister Helen, also one of the community's founders.

Weaving was a love and talent of Sister Anne's. "Here at the monastery, we have liturgical masterpieces from her loom as a master weaver, an art she loved and created as long as her health would permit," said Sister Helen.

At the time of her death, Sister Anne was not only the oldest member of the Poor Clares in Bloomington, but also the first to be buried in the community's grave plot at Resurrection, in the section for Catholic religious orders. Nearby are the graves of religious women from other communities, including Visitation, Good Shepherd and St. Joseph, as well as male orders, including the Christian Brothers.

Continued on page 2

A simple Irish coffin

More than 20 years ago, the Poor Clares in Bloomington came into possession of a solid oak handmade coffin made in Ireland and kept it in the basement of the monastery. At one point in her life, Sister Anne Condon had indicated her desire to be buried in a plain wooden box "like the one downstairs." Fulfilling that wish, the coffin was prepared by Sister Caroline, who bought foam for the bottom, made a pillow and lined it with a new linen tablecloth given by a Jewish friend.

Laid to rest in the coffin, Sister Anne was remembered through the Order of Christian Funerals — a wake and evening praise at the monastery, funeral mass at St. Bonaventure Catholic Church in Bloomington, and graveside committal service at Resurrection, where the surviving Poor Clares sisters said their goodbyes, each placing a yellow flower of remembrance on the coffin.

Neighborhood paper shines light on St. Mary's

St. Mary's Cemetery was recently featured in a community newsletter for the Field, Regina, and Northrop neighborhoods in south Minneapolis.

Sue Filbin, the editor of *Close to Home*, said she got the idea for the article out of curiosity. "I live less than a mile from the cemetery but I'd never been through the gates. A dear neighborhood friend has walked her dogs at St. Mary's for almost 30 years and appreciates its beauty and history, so I wanted to learn more."

Here is a brief excerpt from the article, entitled *St. Mary's Cemetery: A longtime neighbor:*

> *One of the busiest intersections in our neighborhood — 46th and Chicago — is also among the most quiet. Since 1873, long before traffic became plentiful, the northeast corner of this intersection has been occupied by St. Mary's Catholic Cemetery.*
>
> *With its location near the center of Field Regina Northrop, St. Mary's Catholic Cemetery is geographically part of the community. Its 65 groomed acres provide a resting place for more than 66,000 people, and a quiet space for neighbors and visitors.*

Since publication, Filbin said she received feedback from several readers. "They commented on how much they enjoyed learning about St. Mary's," she said, "and how little we all know about our own neighborhood although we've been here for decades."

To read the full article, go to catholic-cemeteries.org.

On November 7, 2015 at St. Anthony Cemetery in Minneapolis, a new granite marker was dedicated at the grave of Cpl. Daniel Bracken, a Minnesota soldier killed in 1864 during a Civil War battle. The event was co-sponsored by the Minnesota Civil War Commemorative Task Force and The Catholic Cemeteries as part of the state's four-year Civil War commemoration. A similar ceremony was held in 2012 at Calvary Cemetery for Pvt. Edmund Sampare, a St. Paul soldier who died in the Battle of Antietam in 1862.

Poor Clares remember a beloved sister, *continued from page 1*

Similar sections for religious are located at Calvary Cemetery and St. Mary's Cemetery.

"Burial in a Catholic cemetery is a tradition for most religious orders," said John Cherek, director of The Catholic Cemeteries. "The sections in our cemeteries for those who have served the Church are very special places of our shared Catholic heritage."

Actually, in the era when the Bloomington monastery was constructed, it was the tradition of the Poor Clares, a worldwide contemplative order, for its deceased members to be buried beneath the oratory in their monasteries. That was the original plan of the Bloomington community. But by the 1980s, the community decided instead to purchase a plot of graves at Resurrection Cemetery.

"Our numbers were smaller by then, and we wondered, what if one day the monastery would be used for another purpose," said Sister Margaret Mewhorter. "Resurrection is not far from our monastery, and several of us have relatives who are buried there, so it seemed like a good step for us."

Though she struggled with physical problems throughout her long life, Sister Anne never complained. She is remembered for her wisdom and unshakeable faith that touched the hearts of the many people who visited and prayed with her. "She was just filled with gratitude and joy," said Sister Caroline.

In her eulogy, Sister Helen described Sister Anne this way: "She was ever a woman of strength, a strength that helped others to walk upright and stand tall in trust, humble faith and great love."

Religious communities at the cemeteries

More than 2,000 religious from the following 14 orders and communities are buried in designated plots at The Catholic Cemeteries:

Sisters of St. Joseph of Carondelet
Christian Brothers
Dominican Sisters of Incurable Cancer
Sisters of the Good Shepherd
Missionary Sisters of St. Peter Claver
Franciscan Brothers of Peace
Franciscan Sisters of St. Paul, MN
Visitation Sisters
Poor Clare Sisters
Little Sisters of the Poor
School Sisters of Notre Dame
Dominican Fathers
Marist Fathers
Franciscan Fathers

Never too late for memorialization

Following a burial or inurnment, most families invest in a marker, monument, crypt/niche adornments or other ways to permanently memorialize their loved one.

But providing that kind of enduring tribute is not always possible, due to various circumstances. Yet as the following examples show, it's never too late to remember a loved one with a permanent memorialization.

- A family had cared for a severely disabled child at home for many years. When the child died, there was only enough money to pay for burial. The inability to provide a marker for her daughter's grave caused great emotional pain for the grieving mother. Friends got together and raised the funds for a marker. For a situation like this, The Catholic Cemeteries was able to offer a grave marker at a reduced price.

> "I really truly in words can not express how much this means to me and my children…"
>
> — Mother whose friends raised funds for a marker

- Decades ago, a young couple had lost an infant at childbirth. It was an era when that kind of loss was not formally acknowledged as it is today. Later in life, the couple had a marker created for the baby's grave and had his name added to the Wall of Remembrance at the Children's Memorial and Healing Garden at Resurrection Cemetery.
- Families doing genealogy often discover a relative whose grave was never marked. In one example, cousins in a large extended family all remembered talk of an aunt who had died tragically in childhood. At the time, their grandparents hadn't been able to afford a gravestone for the little girl. The cousins purchased a granite marker and after its installation at Calvary Cemetery, met at the graveside for prayers.

To learn about the full range of memorialization opportunities at The Catholic Cemeteries, call **651-228-9991** or go to **catholic-cemeteries.org**.

Offering a priestly presence to grieving families

Whether at the graveside or in the Chapel Mausoleum, Father Richard Mahoney provides a comforting pastoral presence for grieving families at Resurrection Cemetery, offering the prayers and blessings of the rite of committal, the final part of the Order of Christian Funerals.

Father Mahoney, who retired from active parish ministry in 1996, is "on call" to families who request the presence of a priest at a burial or inurnment, said Dean Lensing, a Family Service counselor at Resurrection.

Father Richard Mahoney

"Father Mahoney provides a tremendous service for us at Resurrection," Lensing said. "He's a wonderful resource for families who want the presence of a priest but may not have a parish affiliation or are from out of town, for example." For those types of situations, if requested by a family, Father Mahoney is also available to celebrate Mass or conduct a memorial service in the Resurrection Chapel Mausoleum.

Performing these priestly duties is part of a full retirement life for Father Mahoney, 85, who had served at seven different churches in the greater Twin Cities area over 58 years of active parish ministry.

When he retired 20 years ago, Father Mahoney says, he was ready to give up the many non-priestly demands of parish life and instead focus on the essence of his vocation. "When I mentioned that I wanted to retire at 65 rather than 70 years of age, I remember Archbishop Flynn asking me what I was going to do with all my free time," he said. "I told him, 'I want to be a priest.'"

Since then, Father Mahoney has been on call to serve the Church and community in many ways, including saying Mass, offering blessings, hearing confession, and administering the sacraments at a variety of locations. He is also pastor of a small country parish of St. Agatha in Coates, Minnesota.

"I just like to keep busy," said Father Mahoney, who relaxes with biking, rollerblading, skiing and travel.

As for assisting families at Resurrection, he says it has many rewards. "I meet a lot of very nice people, and I feel that I have done something of value and importance for them at a very difficult time in their lives."

In Memoriam

Richard (Dick) Bierbaum devoted his life to The Catholic Cemeteries

Dick Bierbaum

Dick Bierbaum literally grew up in cemeteries.

In the 1940s, his father, Herman Bierbaum, served first as superintendent of St. Anthony's Cemetery in Minneapolis and later Calvary in St. Paul. In those days, a house across the street was provided as part of the job.

Growing up at Calvary, Dick and his brother, Ron, spent summers helping their dad with grounds duties. After high school, Dick stayed on, and after his dad's death, was eventually named Calvary field manager.

Dick devoted his professional life to caring for Calvary, said Ron. "He knew just about every monument in the cemetery."

Bierbaum retired in 2000 at the end of a 44-year career — he was one of the longest-serving employees in the history of The Catholic Cemeteries. He died on March 28, 2016.

At his burial service at Calvary, pallbearers carried his casket through an honor guard of Catholic Cemeteries field workers, a tribute to Bierbaum's lifelong dedication to the cemeteries. He was laid to rest near his parents, sister and other family members.

"Dick was one of the most hard-working people I've ever met," said John Cherek, director of The Catholic Cemeteries. "Over the years, he mentored many younger employees. He was a genuinely nice and kind person and will be missed."

Updates

Garden Mausoleum dedication to follow Memorial Day mass

Following the 10 a.m. Memorial Day mass at Gethsemane Cemetery, celebrant Father Michael Joncas, a world-renowned church musician and composer and University of St. Thomas professor, will lead a procession to the new Garden Mausoleum for the dedication. A wide array of crypts and niches is available for sale, with special discounts and interest-free financing. **To learn more, contact Jules Bobst at 763-537-4184**.

New graves available at Calvary and St. Mary's

New ground burial sites will soon be available at historic Calvary Cemetery due to road removal near the mausoleum area. A similar roadway was removed at St. Mary's Cemetery last year, and many sites are still available. **For more information, call 651-488-8866**.

Remembering a beloved child: A special opportunity

The Children's Memorial and Prayer Garden at Gethsemane Cemetery offers a special way for bereaved families to memorialize a beloved child. Paving bricks that border the walkway leading to the Memorial are available for inscription of the child's name and years of birth and death. **To learn more, call 651-228-9991**.

HERITAGE

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To receive *Heritage* by email, go to www.catholic-cemeteries.org, fill out the "Contact Us" form and check the "electronic newsletter" option.

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CEMETERY HOURS

Every day of the year, cemetery grounds are open from 8 a.m. to dusk (generally 5 p.m. in the winter). All cemetery offices are normally open Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. and on Saturday, 9 a.m. to noon at Resurrection and Gethsemane.

VISIT US ON THE WEB AT
www.catholic-cemeteries.org

The Catholic Cemeteries

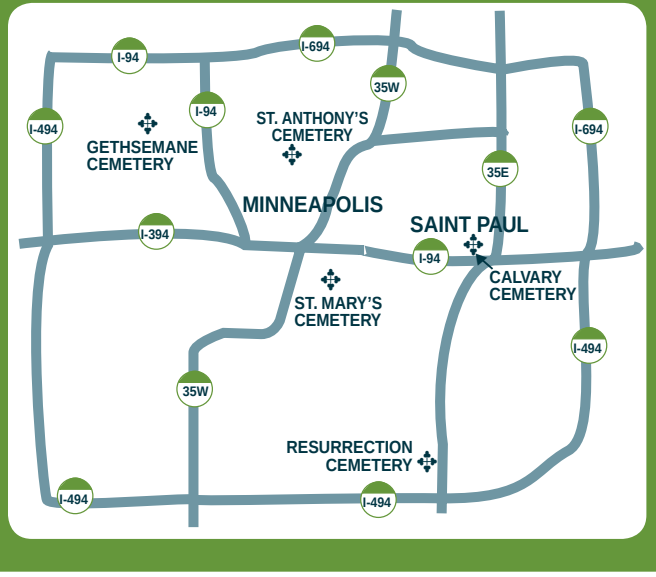
CALVARY CEMETERY
753 Front Avenue
St. Paul, MN 55103
651-488-8866

GETHSEMANE CEMETERY
8151 42nd Avenue N.
New Hope, MN 55427
763-537-4184

RESURRECTION CEMETERY
2101 Lexington Ave. S.
Mendota Heights, MN 55120
651-454-5072

ST. ANTHONY'S CEMETERY
2730 Central Avenue NE
Minneapolis, MN 55418
763-537-4184

ST. MARY'S CEMETERY
4403 Chicago Avenue
Minneapolis, MN 55407
651-488-8866



After Mass there will be special ceremonies to recognize and honor veterans at Gethsemane, Resurrection, St. Anthony's and St. Mary's cemeteries.

Refreshments will be served at all of the cemeteries.

Mass will be held at 10 a.m. RAIN OR SHINE at **Gethsemane Cemetery, St. Anthony's Cemetery, St. Mary's Cemetery, Calvary Cemetery** and **Resurrection Cemetery**.

MEMORIAL DAY WEEKEND HOURS
Each cemetery office has extended hours as follows:

Saturday: 8 a.m. - 4 p.m.
Sunday: 10 a.m. - 4 p.m.
Monday: 8 a.m. - 4 p.m.

Grave decorations for Memorial Day

During the days before and after Memorial Day, artificial flowers, potted plants, decorations and other ornaments are allowed. These types of decorations can be placed on graves beginning at noon on **Thursday, May 26**, and remain there until **Sunday, June 5**. Decorations should be removed by this date; otherwise, the cemetery staff will begin pickup on **Monday, June 6**. After that time, we request fresh-cut flowers only during the growing season.

Memorial Day flowers available for purchase

Over the Memorial Day weekend, a variety of floral bouquets will be available for purchase at Calvary, Gethsemane, Resurrection and St. Mary's cemeteries, and at St Anthony's on Memorial Day only. Sales booths will be located near the entrances of each cemetery while supplies last.

Recognizing veterans over Memorial Day weekend

Traditionally, before Memorial Day, a local Boy Scout troop and a veteran's group place American flags on the gravesites of veterans marked by the gravestones provided by the Veterans Administration (VA), at Resurrection and Gethsemane cemeteries, respectively. For families visiting the graves of veterans not marked with a VA-provided gravestone, flags can be purchased for a minimal charge at the outdoor flower stands in both cemeteries. In addition, a limited supply will be available in the cemetery offices one week prior to Memorial Day.

Commemorating veterans, living and deceased

At each of the Memorial Day Masses, at all the cemeteries, The Catholic Cemeteries will offer a special recognition of and prayer for all veterans. Cards will be available to write the names of living and deceased veterans. The cards will be brought forward at the offertory and all will be remembered in the Mass intentions. Look for the tables and cards in or near the tents that are set up for Mass. There will be someone there to assist you. These cards will also be available in the cemetery offices the week before and during the Memorial Day weekend prior to Mass time on Memorial Day.